Annotated Bibliography: The Impact of Divorce on a Child’s Intimate Relationships

Ottoway, J. Amber. “The Impact of Parental Divorce on the Intimate Relationships of Adult Offspring: A Review of the Literature” *Graduate Journal of Counseling Psychology:*Vol. 2:Iss.1, Article 5. Print

Amber J. Ottoway provides a detailed overview on parental divorce and the impact it places on the intimate relationships of the child as an adult. Ottoway outlines the effects of parental divorce on an adult’s relationship into associate factors such as the age of the child at the time of divorce, gender, family conflict, and trust. She finds in her research that for each factor, excluding family conflict, contradicts the findings on the effects of parental divorce. She determines this is due to lack of research on this subject matter, therefore concluding that more research needs to be done on this topic along with altering research methods to eliminate the mixed findings.

Ottoway is somewhat a pioneer on this untouched subject and does well explaining her findings and has the sources to back them up. She outlines her ideas clearly and thoroughly explains each one with clarity. She uses her sources to her advantage and provides quality information while doing so.

The factors that directly relate to divorce and a child’s intimate relationship that she exposed in her article are great to use as a base in a research paper and find more information on. While Ottoway does state in her conclusion there is much more research to be done, she also provides suggestions of subtopics to further back the main claim. The one downfall that even she expressed is some of her research she was able to find was outdated.

Stolberg, L. Arnold and Elizabeth Mullet. “Divorce and Its Impact on the Intimate Relationships of Young Adults” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*; 2002, Vol. 38 Issue 1/2, p39.Print

Elizabeth Mullet and Arnold L. Stolberg present a study of the long-term impact divorce has on a young adult’s intimate relationships. They did so by assessing the different levels of intimacy and communication patterns in four types of couples: ones which neither spouse experienced parental divorce, where only one partner, male or female, experienced parental divorce, and where neither partner experienced parental divorce. In their study all subjects were undergraduate psychology students between 18 and 30 years of age who have currently been in a relationship for at least three months. Through a set of questionnaires that assessed intimacy and communications, Mullet and Stolberg reported the female had significant lower levels of intimacy and mutually constructive communication and avoidance conflict. However, divorce did not seem to influence intimacy and communication patterns in relationships where the male only experienced divorce. Mullet and Stolberg concluded at this stage in development there was not a compounded effect on intimacy when both partners experienced their parent’s divorce.

This journal is mostly a study that shows the results of their findings. While they present statistics about divorce in the beginning of their study, most of their writing is just showing the outcome of their research. While they presented the outcomes clearly it was done blandly. It would be hard for a reader to connect.

The journal does show many statistics through formulas and tables to make their claims plausible that could easily be used to support a researcher’s proposal. The different dynamics of research they portray gives insight to different variables of divorce and provides specific information and a more in-depth look at divorce. It would be great to use as a form of rebuttal.

Van Schaick, Kelly. “The Impact of Paternal Involvement and Parental Divorce on Young Adults' Intimate Relationships” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*; 2001, Vol. 36 Issue 1/2, p99.Print

Kelly Van Schaick explores the long-term effects of divorce on young adults, primarily focusing on the impact a father over an extended period of time has on their child’s intimate relationships in young adulthood. He finds parental divorce is directly related to the decrease in paternal involvement. Schaick gathered 408 participants from divorced and intact families between the ages of 18-34 and had them complete a report based on paternal involvement, intimacy, commitment, security, and trust. He performed many analyses to find out the amount of influence paternal involvement and parental marital status placed on relationship outcomes, and found that paternal participation considerably manipulates all of the dimensions of a relationship that was assessed in his study despite of parental marital status.

Schaick offers extensive information and displays it clearly in the form of tables and graphs. The use of headings made his research flow and easy to comprehend. He is very clear on how he thinks paternal involvement is a major factor to a child’s intimate relationships as a young adult. His article is extensively researched. He uses outside sources to help back his claim but concludes many of his findings from his own study as well.

The use of statistics that he proved in his study is a great tool for a writer to cite information from. Schaick’s study represented a unique approach to assessing the impact of divorce on a child’s intimate relationships but is effective in doing so.

Ming, Cui. “The Differential Effects of Parental Divorce and Marital Conflict on Young Adult Romantic Relationships” *Personal Relationships*; Sep. 2010, Vol. 17 Issue 3, p331-343, 1 Diagram. Print

Ming examines in a short-term study the effects of divorce and marital conflict on young adult children’s romantic relationships. He uses a sample of 285 young adults and presented information using formulas and equations to support his hypothesis that divorce and marital conflict were independently connected with young adult children’s intimate relationships. He does so through different methods. Parental divorce is correlated with young adult’s poor relationship quality through a pessimistic attitude toward marriage and an optimistic attitude toward divorce and also sufficient efforts of commitment on their own current relationships. Ming’s states these findings in his research can be used for future research.

Ming doesn’t clearly state a side on the topic he is researching but appears more neutral or undisclosed. His style of writing is merely research and facts, leaving no room for personality. However, he does present quality information while doing so.

While Ming’s extensive use of formulas and equations to form variables in his research presented great information, it could easily go over the head of many readers that are trying to use his work as a source for research. To be able to read his graphs and diagrams you have to understand his formulas quite extensively. Although, he does present his facts clearly that he cited from other sources.

Kirk, Allison. “The Effects of Divorce on Young Adults' Relationship Competence: The Influence of Intimate Friendships” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*; 2002, Vol. 38 Issue 1/2, p61. Print

Allison Kirk presents a study that examines the potential effect or contribution divorce places on the relationship proficiency of young adults. She specifically measured self esteem, fear of intimacy, romantic relationship satisfaction, and beliefs about marriage to further back her claim. In Kirk’s article she also studies other factors that relate to her main topic such as the life of the children after divorce, differences between divorced and intact families, and the role of friendship as a defense against the effects of divorce. In her findings it showed that divorce did not affect relationship proficiency but did manipulate the self esteem, fear of intimacy, and romantic satisfaction of young adults. Products of divorce were more affected by the fear and expectations of divorce. Kirk’s concluding findings are that family upbringing and the value of friendship are key interpreters to a young adult’s relationship proficiency.

Kirk’s article provides clear and easy to follow information. The structure and style of writing guide the reader through her article with ease. Her use of headings for each subtopic makes it easy for the reader to reflect on her work without having to skim through the whole article to find information about a particular issue. She also provides a glossary for words that some might not know the definition of.

Kirk is an excellent source to use because her own sources are all mostly up to date and relevant. Her comparison to a normal family can also help a writer make counter claims on the subject. Her extensive research gives many opportunities to cite credible information in a research paper.

Mahl, David. “The Influence of Parental Divorce on the Romantic Relationship Beliefs of Young Adults” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*; 2001, Vol. 34 Issue 3/4, p89. Print

David Mahl presents a high quality study that examines the outlook of college students on their romantic relationships and experiences following the divorce of their parents. For Mahl’s study he interviewed 28 college students about their intimate relationships and found that inconsistency was prevalent in the nature of their divorce-linked experiences. He captures this by categorizing the variability into groups such as the pre-divorce situation and post-divorce changes. Mahl constructed a representation to help further interpret his research. His results show parental divorce should not just be seen as a negative event. There are also many circumstances where a divorce has strengthened a family’s bond as well.

In Mahl’s article his opinion is apparent and his model of research reflects as such. Unlike other articles where a research study has been done, Mahl’s findings showed different results to his own outlook on the subject. The flow of his article is somewhat jumbled in areas, providing little use of transition-type headings. This could make it hard for a researcher to key in on certain issues without having to annotate his whole work. However, he is very relatable with his addition of personal experiences he placed throughout his article.

Mahl proficiently uses many real-life situations and includes personal interviews of people who have gone through divorce and are now young adults in intimate relationships. This is a major strength to his claim and can provide personality to a researcher’s own paper. It also provides an opposite result to what was being studied which could provide some counter evidence in an argument to not seem as hard-driven to people reading the article who oppose the researcher’s opinion

Amato, P. R., Kane, J. B., & James, S. (2011). Reconsidering the 'Good Divorce'. *Family*

*Relations*, *60*(5), 511-524. Web. Academic Search Premier April 11, 2011.

Amato, Kane, and James co-write this article covering the topic of defining the words “good divorce.” They try to what legally it should be. But, they also talk about how the Internet and news media defines the words. Both have similar views that the best kind of divorce is one that has the least amount of emotional pain for both the parents and the children in the situation. The Internet and news media sites go on to associate the words with lawyers and ways to counsel families to make divorce easier. The article goes on to present points of the reality of what divorce is and how a co-parent life for a child might be good but also could make it hard for the child if he/she has to always move from house to house because of laws set for them. The authors try to argue that a “good divorce” is defined differently for every case.

The authors of this article try to argue the point of how important family is to children and that it makes a difference in the divorce process. They set up the argument by starting with defining the words “good divorce” and then going on to state what research has found to be true about a “good divorce.” They effectively talk about past case studies and their outcomes but also talk about the current study they are conducting on families going through the divorce process.

This article gives much insight on how family makes a difference in how a child is affected by a divorce. This article will add more information about family structure and will help provide more points for an argument about what children feel during a divorce. Focused on children in the argument this will give a outside worldview of the family going through a divorce.

Bing, N. M., Nelson, W. M., & Wesolowski, K. L. (2009). Comparing the Effects of

Amount of Conflict on Children's Adjustment Following Parental Divorce. *Journal Of Divorce & Remarriage*, *50*(3), 159-17. Web. Academic Search Premier April 11, 2011.

Nicole M. Bing, W. M. Nelson III, and Kelly L. Wesolowski co- write this article to discuss the adjustment that children go through in the post divorce process. Bing, Nelson, and Wesolowski also discuss in this article that statistics about the adjustment process. Along with the statistics the adjustment for children also might come with social and physiological affects on children.

The authors effectively grab the audience’s attention by naming off affects of divorce on children right away and then they go back and discuss in more depth what each affect involves. Their use of information and statistics is used wisely and does not over whelm the audience.

The information brought out tin this article is great points to bring up in an argument in which discussion of affects on children in the topic. The process of adjustment is big factors in the way children discover how their life will be when everything is final with the divorce situation. According to the authors of this article the adjustment stage of divorce is one of the most critical points in the process for children.

Bjarnason, T., & Arnarsson, A. M. (2011). Joint Physical Custody and Communication

with Parents: A Cross-National Study of Children in 36 Western Countries. *Journal Of Comparative Family Studies*, *42*(6), 871-890. Web. Academic Search Premier April 11, 2011.

Bjarnason and Arnarsson co-write this article about studies that were conducted across thirty-six countries in the Western hemisphere. In this article the two writers discuss the statistics of the family structure of post divorce families and the different affects on children in each case. One example is children that live with their single mothers tend to loose a relationship with their fathers within three years after the divorce. Their view on the affects of children after divorce is focused on the family structure and how that affects the children’s future viewpoints on life, marriage, and children.

The way these two writers approach the topic in this article is in a very informational view. They don’t seem to argue the point if children are affected by divorce but whether or not family structure affects the child. They bring up each parenting style but also the different ways countries around the worldview that family structure. The way this article is set up gives ease to the audience when reading and understanding of all of the information.

This article helps provide much needed information and points to make an argument about the affect of divorce on children in the situation. Giving insight to different countries in the world with help not make the United States legal system look so terrible against children. Many countries around the world have some of the same divorce issues that the United States has. Even though this is a more informational article it gives many points to work into an argument.

Hakvoort, E. M., Bos, H. W., Van Balen, F., & Hermanns, J. A. (2011). Post divorce

Relationships in Families and Children's Psychosocial Adjustment. *Journal Of Divorce & Remarriage*, *52*(2), 125-146. Web. Academic Search Premier April 11, 2011.

Hakvoort, Bos, Van Balen, and Hermanns co-wrote this article on the affect of different family relationships post divorce. They specifically look at the relationships of single mother to child and single mother and stepfather to child. They present both the negative and positive aspects of each relationship. They come to a conclusion that if a stepfather is added to the family the child might have better chances relating to adults in the future but the studies showed that children still had bad behavior issues in a family that had a stepfather and the ones, which just contained a single mom.

The co-authors of this article set up this argument by defining all of the different types of relationships so the audience can clearly understand the authors’ viewpoints and what they are actually trying to argue. They also bring up important and relevant studies that peak the interest of the audience. Their purpose is to define the affects of different family relationships have on children in post divorce situations. Their main goal is to find the best possible solution for children in post divorce situations.

This article helps present and back up previous information to make points in the argument and will add more dynamic to the points that will be made. This is a highly informational article with the topic on family relationships post divorce. The points made in this article prove the point of the affect divorce has on children.